

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 22, 2008

Dear Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus Member:

As leaders of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, we urge you to support floor passage of H.R. 5949, the Clean Boating Act of 2008, introduced by Representatives Steve LaTourette and Candice Miller, Co-Chair of the House Boating Caucus. H.R. 5949 would permanently exempt incidental discharges from recreational boats from permitting under the Clean Water Act.

If Congress does not act soon, the 18 million recreational boats in operation nationwide will be required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit from the Environmental Protection Agency and/or individual States by September 2008.

This requirement emerged from a court decision to require Clean Water Act regulation of ballast water, but it extended to all vessel discharges and swept up recreational boats even though they do not have ballast water. Not only will such a regulatory regime do significant damage to the recreational boating industry and America's family boaters, it will jeopardize the state conservation and environmental protection programs funding by the \$700 million in excise tax revenues on motorboat fuel, import duties on boats, and fishing tackle and products.

H.R. 5949 provides a simple legislative remedy to this problem by reinstating the longstanding permitting exemption for pleasure boats, while also working to ensure environmental protection by enabling the potential development of management practices under a different section of the Clean Water Act. The Clean Boating Act constitutes a genuine bipartisan, good government solution for America's everyday families.

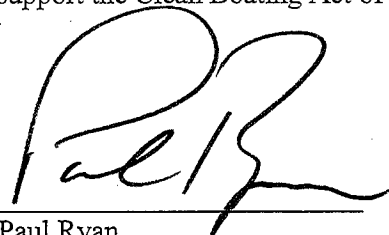
About 73 million Americans—one-third of all adults—went boating in 2006. There are nearly 18 million recreational boats in operation across the nation, and spending on new boat sales and services topped \$39.5 billion in 2006 alone. Many of these boaters are also sport anglers and hunters, a 34-million strong demographic that has an annual national economic impact of \$76 billion. Hunters and anglers spent \$11 billion on boat fuel, boats and related equipment last year, and the \$40 billion sportfishing industry supports more than one million U.S. jobs. Recreational boating supports 900,000 jobs nationwide.

This necessary legislative fix will keep boating simple, safe and fun for American families. The Senate companion bill, S. 2766, passed out of the Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously this week, and action is needed now in the House. We strongly urge you to support the Clean Boating Act of 2008.

Sincerely,



Ron Kind
Co- Chair



Paul Ryan
Co- Chair



Dan Boren
Vice- Chair



Steve Pearce
Vice- Chair